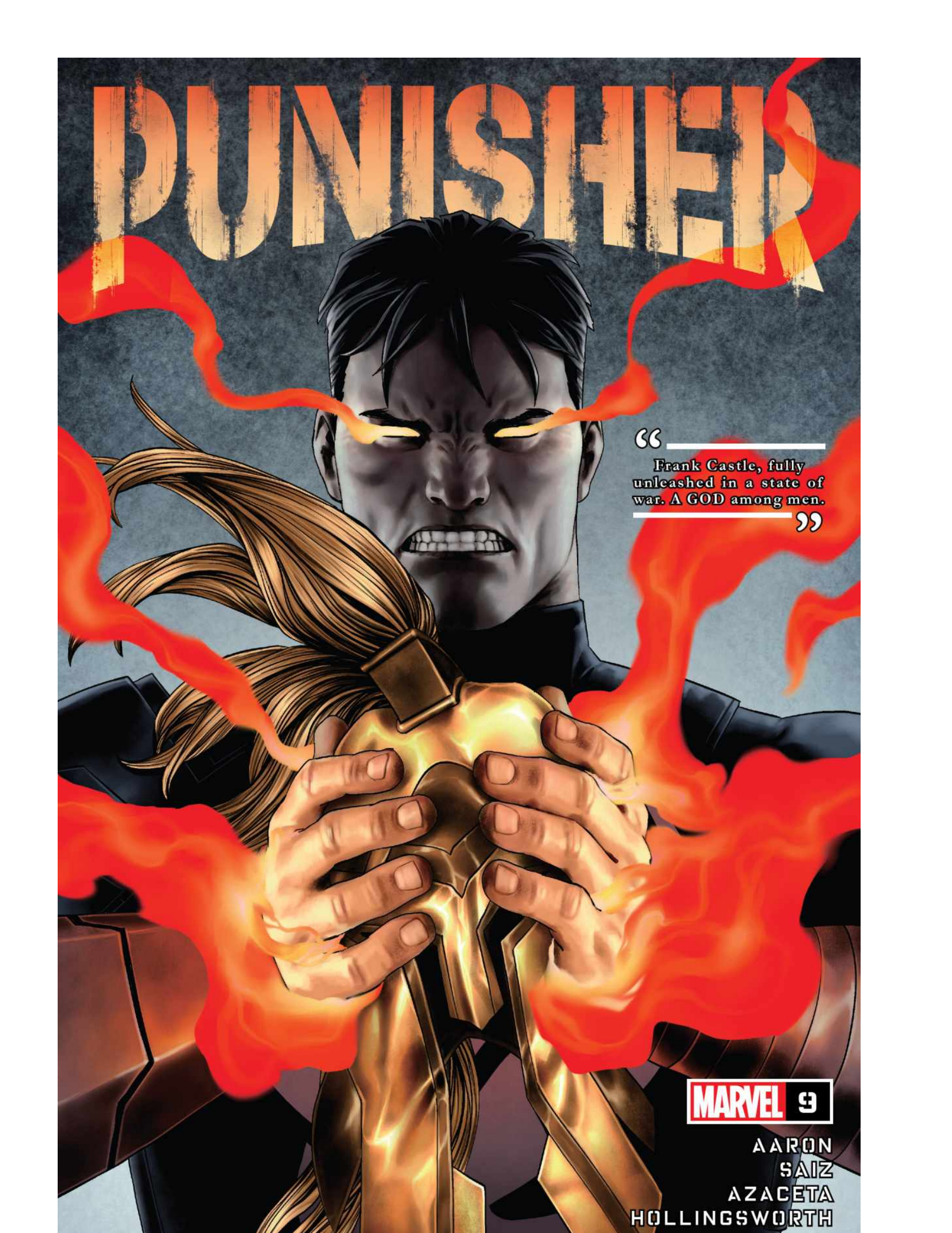


PUNISHER

A comic book cover for the Punisher. The central figure is Frank Castle, shown from the chest up, wearing his iconic black tactical suit. He has a fierce, angry expression with his teeth bared and glowing yellow eyes. He is holding a golden, ornate casket or urn with both hands. From the casket, a long, flowing blonde mane of hair erupts, resembling a lion's mane. The entire scene is surrounded by intense, swirling flames in shades of red and orange. The background is a dark, textured grey.

“
Frank Castle, fully
unleashed in a state of
war. A GOD among men.
”

MARVEL 9

AARON
SAIZ
AZACETA
HOLLINGSWORTH

MARVEL REMEMBERS



CARLOS PACHECO 1961-2022

"My friend Carlos Pacheco was a sweetheart of a guy who loved comics, the Marvel comics that he read as a child most of all. He brought an enthusiasm to his work that went beyond the drive of the professional — he was truly invested in the characters and their fictitious lives. His work combined the dynamics of John Byrne with the realism of Neal Adams, creating a synthesis that captured the essence of American super hero comics — a form that was exotic to Carlos as he first read the translated stories but which he absorbed and came to embody like a native. A citizen of Spain, the Marvel Universe was his true home."

— TOM BREVOORT

"Carlos was a dream collaborator who made every story better with his ideas, his brilliant storytelling and his beautiful art. But more, he was warmhearted, enthusiastic and a wonderful person. I was thrilled to work with him but happier still to have him as a friend. He will be enormously missed."

— KURT BUSIEK

AFTER RETIRED MARINE FRANK CASTLE'S WIFE AND CHILDREN WERE KILLED BY STRAY GUNFIRE DURING A SHOOT-OUT IN CENTRAL PARK, HE BEGAN A ONE-MAN VIGILANTE WAR ON CRIME. ARMED WITH A VAST ARSENAL AND GRIM DETERMINATION, HE BECAME THE...

PUNISHER

THE CULT OF ASSASSINS KNOWN AS THE HAND MADE FRANK CASTLE AN OFFER HE COULDN'T REFUSE: BECOME THEIR HIGH SLAYER IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF HIS LONG-DEAD WIFE, MARIA. FRANK NOW SERVES AS THE HAND'S FIST OF THE BEAST, RESIDING IN THEIR FORTRESS IN JAPAN ALONG WITH MARIA. AS MARIA'S MEMORY RETURNS, SO HAVE HER QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR ABSENT CHILDREN, WHOM THE HAND HAS BEEN UNABLE TO RESURRECT. FRANK HAS ALSO BEEN MANIFESTING SUPERNATURAL ABILITIES DUE TO HIS GROWING CONNECTION TO THE DEMONIC BEAST, A CAUSE OF CONCERN AMONG HIS ONE-TIME ALLIES.

ARES, THE GOD OF WAR, IS THE LEADER OF A CULT OF HIS OWN DISCIPLES AND HAS BEEN ANGERED OVER FRANK'S ALLIANCE WITH THE HAND. ARES LED AN ARMY TO THE HAND'S STRONGHOLD FOR A FINAL CONFRONTATION WITH FRANK, WHO IS ARMED WITH A GUN STOCKED WITH BULLETS SPECIALLY FORGED FROM THE SHATTERED REMNANTS OF A MYSTICAL DAGGER.

THE KING OF KILLERS

Book TWO, Chapter THREE

"IF IT BE THE WILL OF THE BEAST"

by **JASON AARON, JESÚS SAIZ & PAUL AZACETA**

color artist **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH**

letterer **VC's CORY PETIT**

JESÚS SAIZ
cover artist

JUNGGEUN YOON
variant cover artist

production design
NICK RUSSELL

assistant editor
MARTIN BIRO

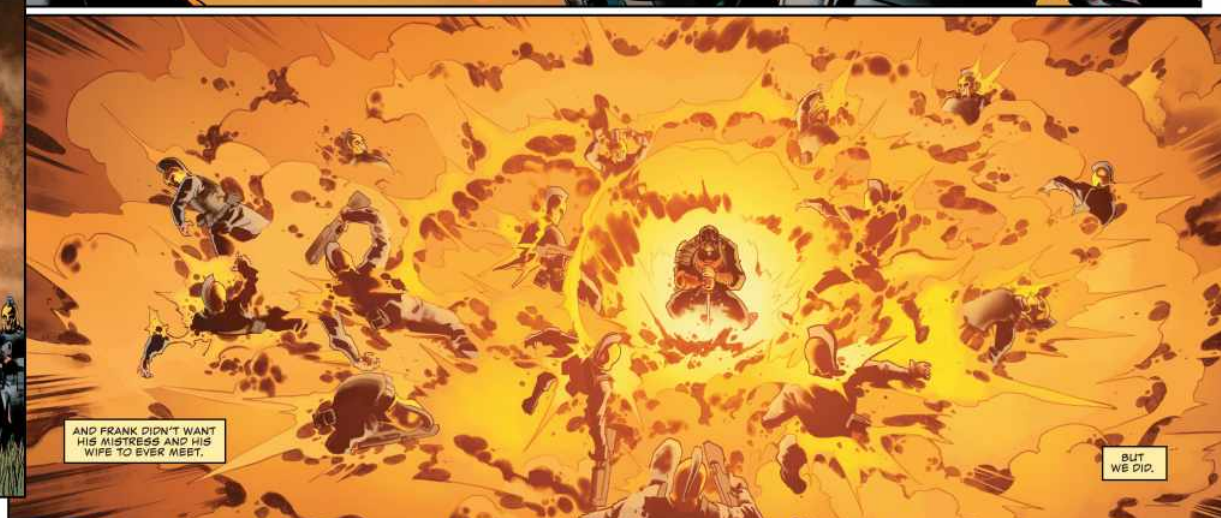
associate editor
ANNALISE BISSA

editor

editor in chief









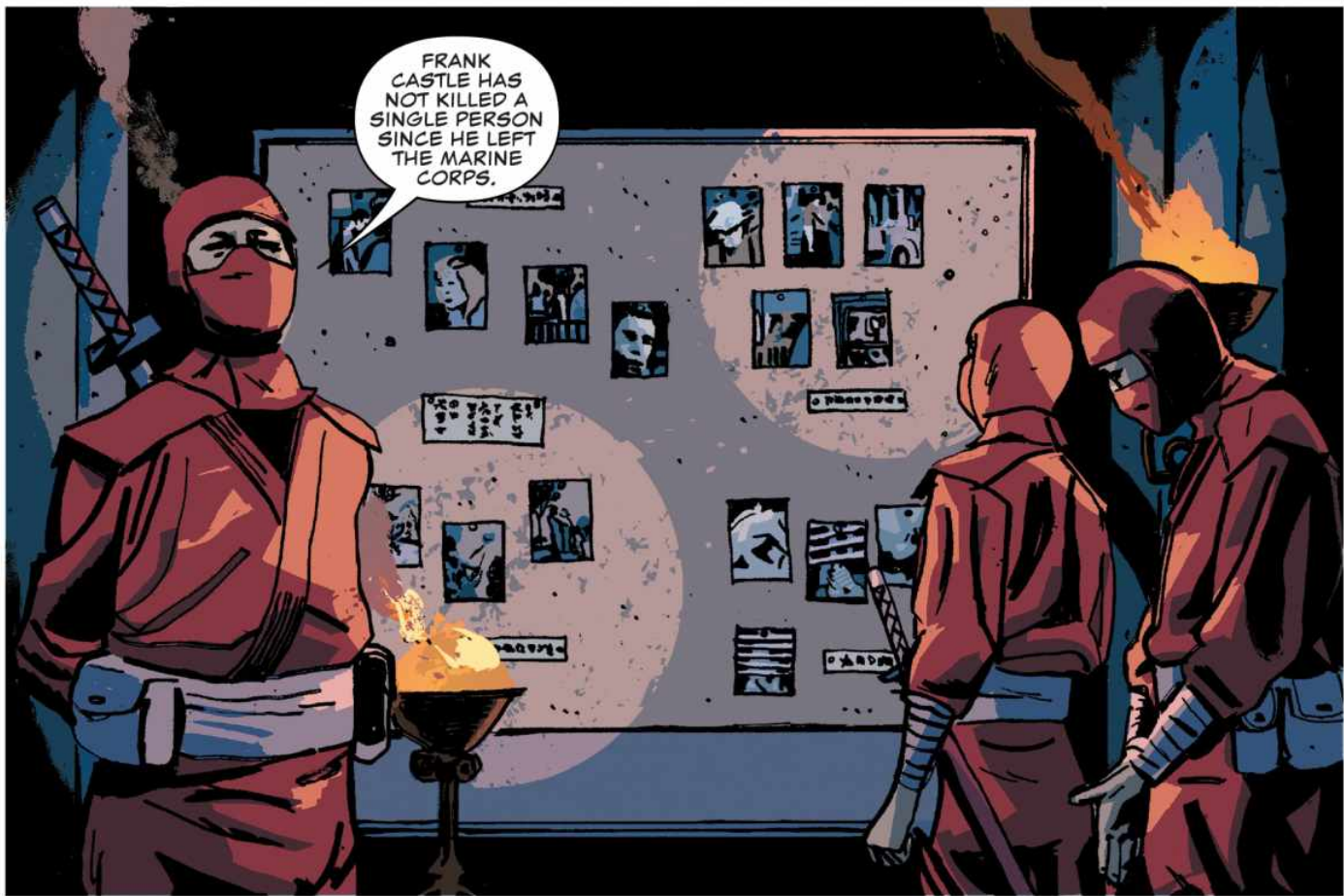


LIKE PENITENT MEN
WHO'D SEEN THE
LIGHT OF GOD ON THE
ROAD TO DAMASCUS.



THAT'S WHEN
THEY'D TELL
STORIES OF
FRANK.





"FRANK CASTLE WAS
FIRST BLESSED
WHEN HE WAS 10.



"AND AGAIN
WHEN HE
WAS 18.



"AFTER THAT...THE
BLESSINGS BECAME
ALMOST A DAILY
OCCURRENCE."





SOLDIERS
CAN COME HOME
FROM WAR AND
REASSIMILATE THEMSELVES
INTO SOCIETY, THOUGH
NOT ALWAYS WITHOUT
EFFORT.

BUT THIS IS
NO MERE SOLDIER.
ON THIS, ANYONE WHO
EVER SAW HIM IN
COMBAT WOULD
AGREE.

AND HIS WAR
DID NOT BEGIN WHEN
HE PICKED UP A RIFLE.
NEITHER WILL IT END NOW
THAT HE'S PUT ONE
DOWN. IT CANNOT.



WITH ALL DUE
RESPECT, PRIESTESS,
YOU SAY THIS, AND YET...
BY ALL DISCERNIBLE
EVIDENCE...HIS WAR HAS
INDEED ENDED.

FRANK CASTLE
HAS BECOME A
DEVOTED FAMILY
MAN.



NOT WITHOUT
SOME EFFORT OR
ADJUSTMENT, AS
YOU SAID.

HE AND HIS
WIFE STILL ATTEND
MARRIAGE
COUNSELING.

ACCORDING TO
THEIR COUNSELOR'S
PRIVATE NOTES, THE
COUPLE IS MAKING SLOW
BUT DELIBERATE
PROGRESS.

SHE FEELS
FRANK IS
BEGINNING TO
OPEN UP.



THE THERAPIST
FEELS THAT HE
WANTS TO BE THERE,
WITH HIS FAMILY.

AND WE SEE
NO REASON TO
BELIEVE THAT HE
WILL DIVERT
HIMSELF FROM
THAT PATH.

WITHOUT...
PROPER
MOTIVATION.

WHAT
ARE YOU
SAYING?



WE ARE
NINJA OF THE
HAND.

WHEN WE
WISH IT, WE ARE
LIKE SHADOW.

HE WILL
NEVER KNOW
THAT WE WERE
THERE.



"NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW. WE CAN MAKE IT APPEAR TO BE... ANY SORT OF KILLING WE WISH.

HELLO?!
THEY'RE
SHOOTING IN
THE PARK!!!



"ONE THAT WILL ENCOURAGE HIM TO RESUME HIS KILLING SPREE.

I DON'T KNOW,
THERE WERE A BUNCH
OF THEM SHOOTING EACH
OTHER AND THEY RAN AWAY
BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE
HERE SHOT!



"WHAT I'M SAYING, ARCHPRIESTESS... IS THAT IF YOU WISH FRANK CASTLE TO BECOME THE FIST OF THE BEAST...

MOVE!
EMTS COMING
THROUGH!



"...WE MUST EXCISE
THAT WHICH IS
HOLDING HIM BACK."





WE REAP,
ONLY THE BEAST
MAY SOW.

I HAVE
OBSERVED FRANK
CASTLE SINCE HE WAS
A CHILD AND FIRST SHOWED
PROMISE, BUT I HAVE NOT
STEERED HIM IN
ANY WAY.

WE CANNOT
MAKE THIS MAN
INTO SOMETHING
HE IS NOT.



THE
BEAST MUST
PROVIDE.



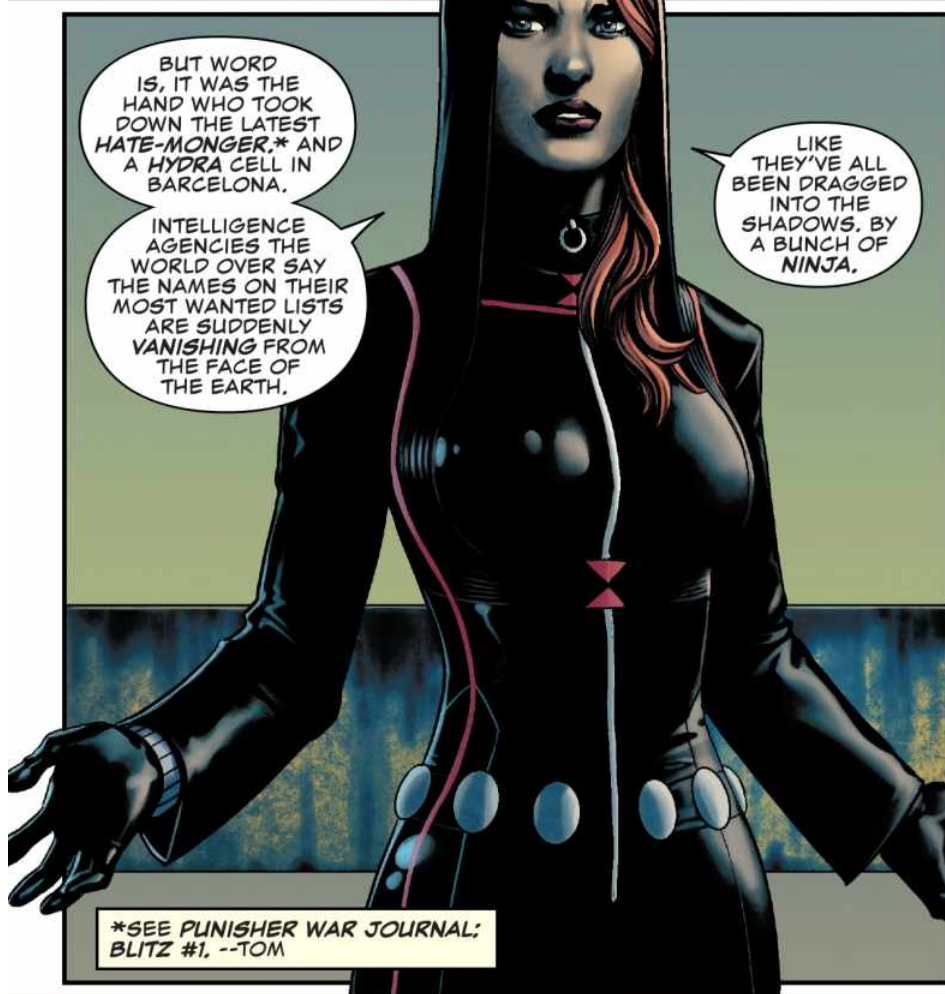
IF HE IS
MEANT TO BE THE
KING OF KILLERS...IF
IT BE THE WILL OF THE
BEAST...THEN THIS...
ALL OF THIS...DON'T
YOU SEE?

THIS
TEMPTATION
IS NOT THE
END.



THIS IS THE
BEGINNING OF FRANK
CASTLE'S RISE.

LET US
PRAY, MY
BROTHERS.









THE UNCANNY SENSES
HE HAD TO DETECT A
WAITING AMBUSH.



THE IMPOSSIBLE
SHOTS HE MADE.

GRRRRRGHHH!!!



THE STEELY CALM HE
PROJECTED, EVEN IN
THE FACE OF CARNAGE
AND CHAOS.



THE STORYTELLERS
ALL FELT A SENSE
OF AWE AT HAVING
SEEN HIM IN ACTION.



PROFOUND GRATITUDE
FOR HAVING HAD FRANK
AS THEIR SAVIOR.



BUT ALSO
FEAR.



FEAR OF THE AWESOME,
UNQUENCHABLE INFERNO
THAT MUST RAGE INSIDE
A MAN SUCH AS THAT.



THE MORE THEY TALKED, THE MORE I MARVELED, FOR THE MAN THEY WERE DESCRIBING WASN'T THE MAN I KNEW.



THIS WAS THE FRANK WHO WENT OFF TO WAR AND NEVER WROTE HOME. NEVER SEEMED TO MISS THE FAMILY HE'D HARDLY BOTHERED TO MEET.



I THOUGHT OF THE LETTERS HE WROTE ME WHEN WE'D FIRST MET. LETTERS I STARTED TO SUSPECT WERE NEVER WRITTEN BY HIM TO BEGIN WITH.



I BEGAN TO WONDER...IF THE MAN I MARRIED...WAS A MAN I KNEW AT ALL.



IF MAYBE I WAS THE MISTRESS.



AND IT WAS THE WAR HE WAS WEDDED TO.



FRANK...



I'M PROUD OF...



IT'D ALWAYS SEEN THE WAR.





I SHOULD'VE BEEN DESPERATE TO TAKE MY KIDS AND GET AWAY FROM HIM.

I KNEW IT! GOD BLESS THE BEAST! AT LAST, THE MURDER MESSIAH IS REBORN!



BUT I DIDN'T FEEL ANY OF THOSE THINGS.



FOR HIM TO BE SO GOOD AT A THING, SO BORN TO IT.

FRANK?

A THING I COULD SEE HE WAS TRYING TO WALK AWAY FROM IN ORDER TO BE WITH HIS FAMILY.



NO, ARCHPRIESTESS. NOT YOU.

SO SAYS THE FIST.

WALKING OUT OF THAT BAR AFTER HEARING THOSE STORIES, I REALIZED...



...I'D NEVER
LOVED MY
HUSBAND MORE.

WELCOME
HOME, MY
LOVE.



HE MAY HAVE
BEEN BORN
TO THE WAR...

NO...



...BUT HE HAD
CHOSEN ME.



AND NO WAR
WOULD EVER
TEAR US APART.





ON THE STREET, THEY'RE SAYING NINJA ARE HUNTING THE WORST OF THE WORST.

HUNTING ON BEHALF OF THE PUNISHER.

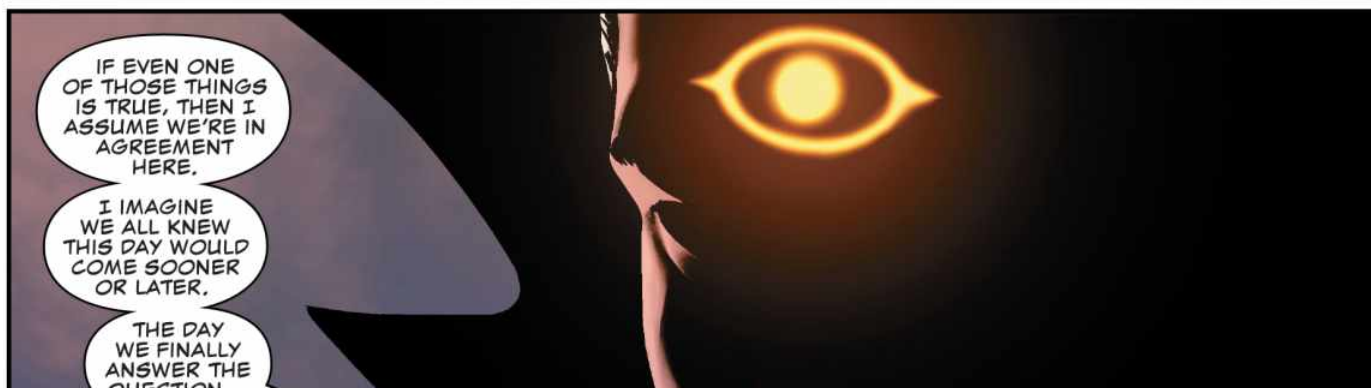
PEOPLE SAY HE TOOK DOWN THE APOSTLES OF WAR, KILLED ARES HIMSELF.

ARES?
ARES IS A GOD.



YEAH, WELL, WORD IS...AND LOOK, I KNOW HOW THIS SOUNDS, BUT PEOPLE DON'T TEND TO LIE TO ME...

...WORD IS THE PUNISHER FLIES NOW.



IF EVEN ONE OF THOSE THINGS IS TRUE, THEN I ASSUME WE'RE IN AGREEMENT HERE.

I IMAGINE WE ALL KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME SOONER OR LATER.

THE DAY WE FINALLY ANSWER THE QUESTION.

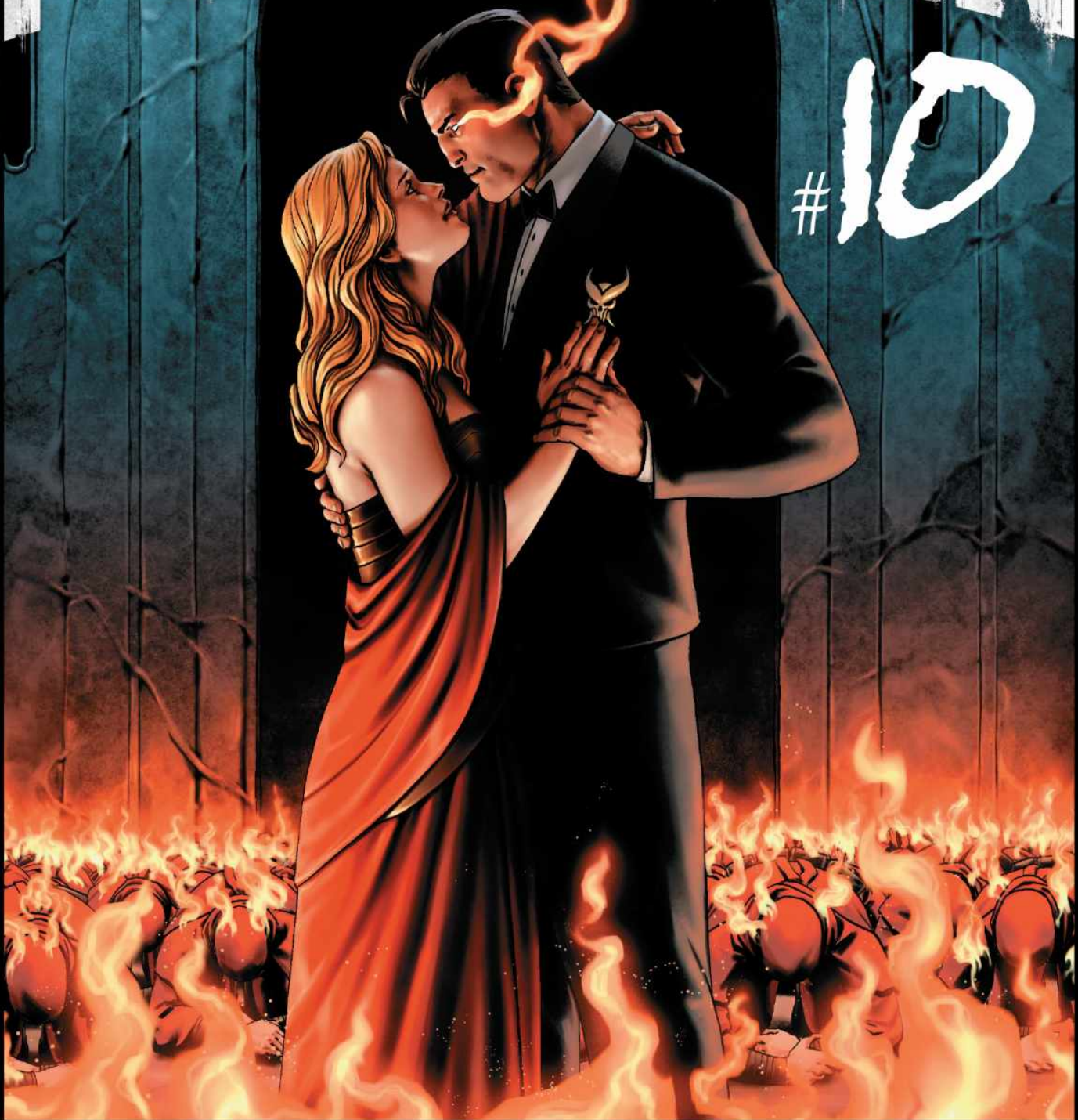


...HOW DO
YOU SOLVE A
PROBLEM...

...LIKE
FRANK
CASTLE?

NEXT: PUNISHER

#10



AT LAST, THE FIST OF THE BEAST HAS FULLY RISEN, AND THE FULL POWER OF THE NEW PUNISHER IS UNLEASHED UPON THE WORLD. IT'S A BAD DAY TO BE A BAD GUY. MEANWHILE, FRANK'S WIFE, MARIA, UNCOVERS MORE DARK SECRETS FROM THE PAST, INCLUDING MORE MISSING PIECES OF THE PUNISHER'S ORIGIN.

